

COUNTRY LIFE

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(continued.)

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(continued.)

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COUNTRY LIFE

VOL. XLIV.—No. 1130.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 31st, 1918.

PRICE ONE SHILLING, POSTAGE EXTRA.
[REGISTERED AT THE G.P.O. AS A NEWSPAPER.]



GENERAL SIR HENRY SINCLAIR HORNE, K.C.B.

Who took over the Command of the First Army in the autumn of 1916.

From a Drawing by Francis Dodd, one of the Official British Artists.

COUNTRY LIFE

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. We appeal to our readers to send their copies of recent issues of COUNTRY LIFE to the TROOPS AT THE FRONT. This can be done by simply handing them over the counter of any Post Office. No label, wrapper or address is needed and no postage need be paid.

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WHITEHALL OR COUNTY COUNCIL?

A GREAT deal of informal discussion is going on just now about the matter of providing small holdings for such of our fighting men as wish to settle on the land of Great Britain when the war is over. The scheme sanctioned by Parliament is not objected to, save for the reason that it is cumbrous and works too slowly. Crown Colonies are already being prepared for occupation in various parts of the country, in Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Shropshire, for example, but they are only as drops in the ocean when considered in regard to the probable demand. The Board of Agriculture is organising and preparing them admirably. But it is believed in many quarters that the movement would make more rapid progress if it were placed under the control of the local authorities. Experienced men are agreed as to the advisability of sending the men, as far as possible, to the district to which they belong. It would give them the advantage of being among their friends. That is a very solid as well as a pleasant one. The tide of opinion is at present strongly in favour of co-operation, and the old hand as well as the beginner would be more at ease in working with those he had known before than with strangers. Besides, in this kind of business it is no small gain to know a little of the soil and climate, the kind of produce most in demand; in other words, the most saleable things to grow. Marketing, again, is being organised on new lines, so that the small-holder of the future will come into more intimate business relationship with his neighbours. It is

argued that the proper business of the Board of Agriculture does not lie in cultivating the land, but in advising and guiding those who are actually doing so. Obviously, a body which would be in effect the present Executive Committee of the County Agricultural Committee would be more closely in touch with the holders and have local as well as a general understanding of their needs.

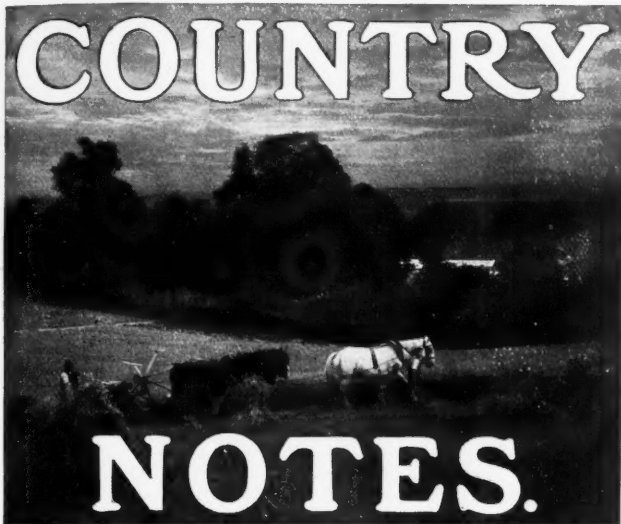
The main objection urged against the County Councils is that they have not, as a whole, made of the Small Holdings Act a pronounced success. One or two counties, of which Norfolk is the chief, have indeed achieved the utmost that could have been expected, but in a general way the County Councils are not very favourable to the establishment of small holdings. This would be as true of the Executive Committee as of the larger body. Nearly all the Executive Committee-men are themselves farmers, and with farmers the sub-division of land is not a popular proposal. They point to other industries and show that the best results are invariably gained by establishments worked on a very large scale. The great farm can afford to purchase the best machinery available; it presumably has the capital to buy seeds and manures in the best markets and at the best prices, and as a producer on the largest possible scale it can sell better. These are unassailable contentions, but they do not exhaust the arguments. During the war we have learned to appraise husbandry at more than its mere pecuniary return. The country at large, other things being equal, would give its preference inevitably not to the style of farming which produced most money, but to that which yielded most food for the country. It is only putting this contention in other words to say that more intensive cultivation is recognised as essential for the future welfare of the country. We cannot here go fully into the reasons why this is so. Many farmers are inclined to deride the argument. They say that when the war is over, in spite of all that has been said and done just now, we shall revert to the low prices of pre-war times, and they think they have clinched the matter when they add that, in spite of the lesson that has been taught us, Free Trade will be re-established. On that knotty controversy it is not necessary to say anything just now, but whoever has carefully studied the sources of supply must be keenly alive to the impossibility of any return within a period lasting, say, as long as that of the youngest life of to-day. On the contrary, production will find it difficult to keep abreast of consumption.

A long time must elapse before Russia comes in as a supplier of wheat, the population of the United States is now large enough to consume the wheat they grow and even take a considerable portion of Canada's surplus. India, Australia and Africa are too far away; the cost of transit in their cases will always keep the prices up, and we may look forward with confidence to a much larger consumption in the East after the war. Before it the people of Japan were abandoning their frugal diet of rice in favour of corn. They will do so much more rapidly in the time that is coming, for the simple reason that they have become one of the richest countries in the world, and are in the way of reorganising China. These considerations, if they stood alone, would make it evident that a more intensive cultivation will be needed in Great Britain; in other words, an enlarged food production. That, indeed, is what the argument for suitable small holdings rests upon. The man who works his own land for a livelihood will in every country and every climate produce more food per acre than those who engage in husbandry on a very large scale. On this basis it is easy to show that the smaller bodies in the country, such as the County Councils, would be more appropriately engaged in finding land for the settlement of soldiers after the war. For one thing, they could buy the estates, a step from which the Government shrinks. Until the National Debt is greatly reduced the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whoever he may be, will always be opposed to capital outlay. But the County Councils would be under no need to refrain from buying.

Our Frontispiece

WE print as frontispiece to this week's issue a drawing of General Sir Henry Sinclair Horne, K.C.B., made by Francis Dodd, one of the Official British Artists, for "Generals of the British Army." Sir Henry Horne, who was born in 1861, entered the Royal Artillery in 1880, and served in the South African War. He took over the command of the First Army in the autumn of 1916.

. It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper.



SENATOR LODGE has given a watchword to the Allies in the declaration he made last week that no peace that satisfies Germany can ever satisfy us. It cannot be a negotiated peace. It must be a dictated peace, and the Allies must dictate it. That is the answer to the pacifism which is continually urging this country to open up peace negotiations with the enemy. If the world wanted to have all this sanguinary fighting renewed again, then it might be possible to patch up an agreement that would put a temporary end to the war. But what Senator Lodge means is that as long as Germany is under the heel of a military caste, then a lasting peace is not possible, and the Germans are slow to realise that they have brought about a new dispensation. They still hanker after a secret conference and the finessing of rival diplomatists which used to settle the conditions after a war in the olden time. If we are to adhere to the principles laid down by President Wilson this method must be regarded as obsolete. The chief principle is that territory must not be allocated to suit the military considerations of this country or that country, land must not be bartered away to overcome the hostility of either a statesman or a nation. The enduring principle of peace is that every land, be it great or small, should be governed according to the wish of its own inhabitants. Their contentment must be the first consideration; the political and military needs of the Government behind them must no longer be allowed to affect the decision. That is the principle which the citizen armies of all nations, at any rate of all the Allied nations, can fight for with the enthusiasm of a good conscience.

THE heart of the country has been moved to deep enthusiasm by the continued success of the Allied offensive. First we have Foch making his name as a general who will henceforth be placed among the half-dozen or so of the great military men of all ages. Then came a series of attacks carried out by Sir Douglas Haig. The British commander is a master of terse, restrained, unexaggerated English, and the brevity of his first reports left one in doubt, not as to whether he had achieved success or not, but whether there was much to spare. But that was, so to speak, only the overture. Last week-end must take its place among the significant moments of history. Nothing like it has occurred since the beginning of the war. From point to point the British Army advanced with almost incredible rapidity, and the news of falling places of strength came so quickly as to be confusing. It was a matter of pride also that the most effective auxiliary to the infantry was to be found in the "whippet tank," an improvement on the first invention. Without this tank we might, indeed, have succeeded, but the cost would not have been far short of that which we had to pay for carrying these same places in 1917. It is something to say that British science has completely outdone German science in this respect as in others. We started far behind the enemy in the efficiency of our aeroplanes and now are far in front of him. It would appear as though the German strength lay in his long, plodding preparation, while our strength lies in the brilliance with which military leaders and scientific inventors alike have risen to the needs of the occasion.

THE countryside adjoining Noyon, Bapaume, Peronne and other towns affected by the Allied offensive has witnessed very dramatic changes during the last twelve months. We

remember last year looking at the wide fertile plain near Noyon which used to be thought the finest wheatland in France, but this was covered with thistles and other weeds. Some 50,000 acres or so of it was allotted to the British Army for cultivating hay and cereals, and after an energetic ploughing and sowing campaign the wheat and oat fields were green with the coming crop when the German offensive spread over the country in March. What it has been like recently may be judged from a general order issued to the enemy troops, the chief of which was to warn them to beware of the Australians, who had an unparalleled gift for worming their way unseen under cover of the standing corn. In a few cases, however, the Germans had actually begun to reap the harvest, but who will get the greater part of the increase is a puzzle not yet decided, although doubt about the matter is being rapidly cleared away. The varying fortunes of war have been exemplified before now in the district. In the autumn preceding their great retreat from the Somme Valley the Germans had cultivated and sown the land for the next year's crop, and the present writer saw the machines of the French threshing it in the autumn of the next year. It looked at one time as though the process of 1916-17 would be reversed in 1917-18.

THE story of the escape of twenty-nine British officers from a German prison camp might have come from the pages of Dumas *père*. It has now been told by Lieutenant Bousfield, one of the men who got away. He had been shot down in an aeroplane in April, 1917, and was finally interned at Holzminden. On arrival he found that some of the boys, as he calls them, had started to dig a tunnel under the grounds of the camp. It began behind a barricade which was watched by two sentinels, but they were very cautious and the sentinels never heard any alarming sound. It took nine months to complete the tunnel and on completion it was about 60yds. long and about 2ft. wide. On July 23rd the adventurous youths began to creep, one by one, through the tunnel. They separated immediately on getting clear of the grounds, and he who told the story was one of three who went across country together. They do not seem to have had any difficulty about food and they travelled night and day, being fortunate in the possession of a compass and a good map. It took thirteen nights' travelling before they covered the 180 miles which lay between them and the neutral camp. Just as they were getting to the journey's end they were spotted by a German sentry, who fired. They scattered in the darkness and the narrator says he never saw the other two again, but went on alone and reached safety at last. Of the twenty-nine fugitives it was said by the Germans that seventeen were re-taken, but how many got safely home is not said.

FROM THE NAVY AND ARMY.

Is England worth fighting for?

Here in the sight of death and the sound of the guns' gross thunder

We read of the strikers at home, of the selfish greed

Which thinks of itself alone, never of our sore need—

We read of them all "coming out," and we read and we wonder.

Is victory nothing to them?

Save the victory only of self and of man against master?

Of grievances voiced by factories void of workers,

Of traffic disorganised, bodily ease to the shirkers?

Is it nothing to them, that through them, we may end in disaster?

Is England worth fighting for?

This is our answer: We shall fight on, though we bitterly wonder

Whether our brothers and sisters are worthy to share

In the peace we shall earn? Can they dare? Can they dare?

Can they share in a peace when their work was to pull it asunder?

M. G. MEUGENS.

CONTROLLED food prices have been issued for blackberries, and it certainly was not before time. The fixed prices are 4d. a pound to public and private buyers and 4½d. to jam manufacturers. On Friday afternoon in a little country town we saw blackberries in the window priced at 1s. 6d. a pound, and wrathful and disappointed must the green-grocers be who had based a profiteering scheme on this crop of wild fruit. Jam manufacturers are much more enterprising and quite as active as the Food Production Department. In the provincial papers many of their advertisements might have been seen last week setting forth the names and addresses

of buyers in every little village and hamlet of their locality and calling for workers to pick blackberries. What with them and the Government it is pretty evident that the brambles will be cleared of their berries, probably before they are ripe. It is entertaining to listen to the discussions that go on at markets and in trains wherever one or two are gathered together. Country people who practically have no garden or orchard fruit to preserve this year had been looking forward confidently to laying up a store of preserve for winter use from the harvest of the common and hedgerow, and the money they are offered instead they do not regard as equivalent. The price of blackberry jam, we believe, is not yet fixed, but it will be astonishing if it corresponds at all closely to the price fixed for the fruit.

IT was a pleasure during last week-end to walk in fields where the wheat was cut and standing in stooks. There has been no such splendid harvest since the year 1868, and one doubts if that famous year could have been comparable with the present. The stooks are thick on the ground and the sheaves as satisfactory to look upon as were the waving fields. The straw is particularly strong and heavy and the ears are beautifully full. At this season one realises as never before the change produced by the ploughing campaign. It looks almost as if the entire countryside had been sown with wheat and oats, with a little barley here and there. The oats and barley are good, but the wheat is surpassing, and England may go to sleep with the assurance that in her granaries is food enough to supply her wants for the greater part of next year, a position which this country has not occupied since the seventies. The other crops are at least satisfactory. Potatoes may not be as good as they were last year, but the total quantity will be greater because of the increased area, and the quality is all that could be desired. Roots for cattle have improved enormously, and altogether the country is entering upon winter with a fuller larder than ever it had in the piping times of peace.

A CORRESPONDENT who has been giving his attention to the economy of breeding tame rabbits explains in answer to a letter which appears in this week's issue that the price of wild rabbits always goes down in the months of August and September, his object being to explain that that of tame rabbits moves in sympathy. But the cause of that fall was to be found in the vast number of rabbits which used to be slaughtered in the cornfields during the harvest. Everybody in the country is familiar with the scene that ensues at the cutting of the last strip of wheat. The rabbits, which have been driven back and driven back again by each swathe cut by the reaper, finally are reduced to desperation and bolt. They used to do so in hundreds, and the number killed on some farms was almost incredible. But this year very few have fallen either to the dog or to the gun or to the man, an eloquent proof, if any were needed, that in a time of scarcity short and sharp is the method of dealing with the rabbit. Every man's hand is against him—at any rate, in the cultivated parts of the country the numbers have been most materially reduced, although we hear that in the wild, uncultivated neighbourhoods the animals have multiplied almost beyond belief. But the uncultivated area is always diminishing.

DURING war it is natural that there should be a considerable amount of restlessness among the population, due to a variety of causes—suspense, anxiety and so on. But whatever the cause the result is the same, that far more people travel, and at a time when they can least stand it the trains are overburdened. Many attempts have already been made to discourage train journeys during war-time, but the most serious is likely to be brought into force in October. It is contemplated to stop many of the long distance trains altogether and to simplify local services; in other words, to stop a train wherever it is possible. The public will and ought to submit without grumbling. In other countries, particularly in France, travelling facilities have already been reduced to a minimum, and there are considerations which enforce steps of the same kind here. The need of saving coal is one of the most prominent, but also there is a great lack of men since the railway companies have been depleted of their able-bodied for the war, and there is a diminution of rolling stock owing to the great quantity that has been sent abroad for the use of our Allies. Further, it has not been possible in any of the belligerent countries to keep the permanent way and trucks, carriages and engines in as perfect repair as we were accustomed to in peace-time. Only what is absolutely necessary has been done, with the result that a considerable deterioration has taken place.

Hence the arising of a situation where most of us will have to be content to be stay-at-homes for the duration.

THE sober and measured judgment on the sinking of the *Lusitania* which occurs in a decision written by Judge Julius M. Mayer is a document that will be of service for all time. It does not come from the clamour of battle, but is like a voice of the ages uttering a truth that will always be recognised. The occasion was that sixty-seven suits had been brought by those who suffered loss from the sinking of the *Lusitania* and who sought damages from the Cunard Steamship Company. The actions were dismissed without costs on the ground that the "act was an act of piracy and of the common enemy of mankind." For this the Steamship Company could not be held responsible, but the American Court of Law was obliged, in examining the charge, to investigate into the truth of the various statements made. They found it untrue that the *Lusitania* was painted like a transport, carried munitions and high explosives and was improperly navigated while passing through the submarine-infested waters of the Irish Coast. The owners are exonerated from the charge of negligence, and Captain Turner is praised and not blamed. But all this gives greater weight to the finding as it affects the real culprits. The destruction of the *Lusitania* by the German Government is characterised as "an inexpressibly cowardly act," and the Judge declares that when the time shall come the United States of America will see to it that reparation shall be made for "one of the most indefensible acts of modern times."

IT happened that on the very day on which this was published Dr. Davis, the surgeon-dentist to the Kaiser, related his conversation with the Emperor William on the subject. Dr. Davis declares that the Kaiser's answer to the American outcry was, "What right have Americans to take passage on these vessels, anyway? If they came on to the battlefield they would not expect us to stop firing, would they?" When it was suggested to him that international law sanctioned the right of search which the submarines did not carry out, he exclaimed hastily, "International law! There is no such thing as international law any more!" He has proved that by precept and example.

THE DEADE CHILDE, 1618.

Thy paradys, hath it wy le garden-grounde?
Myne owne two armes can compasse it arounde.
Are pools therein, bothe deepe and limpid? Eyes
Wherein sweete thoughts, lyke prettie fishes, ryse.
Gather the happie bees their honie? Lips
Whose sweetnesse never cloyeth him who sips.
Is th' ayre odorous with flowers? Breath
Lyke thyme and galyngale on windie heath.
Do thrushes sing, and nightingales? A voyce
Whose slightest tone doth make the heart rejoyce.
Are fruit-trees laden there? Alas! Too soone
The trees were stripp'd by sudden stormes in June.
By stormes? Where then thy paradys is founde?
He's deade, and my heart's with him undergrounde.

CYRIL DE MONTJOIE RUDOLF.

"I AM shutting up this shop for a fortnight's holiday and hope customers will excuse the inconvenience until I come back again." This notice has been hanging for some time in a hardware shop in a busy North London thoroughfare. Beneath on a telegraph form is a more personal message addressed to "the lady who bought six meat tins." Apparently the order could not at the time be completed, but the missing tins might now be had by calling upon the dairyman next door. The proprietors of the one-man, or one-woman, businesses have been hard put to it this August to take those annual holidays which the people of the large towns, at least, have come in recent years to regard as necessities of life. In and around London numbers of shopkeepers in a strait between the Scylla of losing custom and the Charybdis of losing holidays have taken their courage in both hands and decided to close their shops. It was a bold step, one that, before the war, nothing save a funeral or an infectious disease would have justified even for a day. The consciousness that they were risking the tradesman's talisman "good will" seems to have haunted many of them, for notices such as this, but varying in intimacy and literary value, have generally been fixed to the windows before the drawn blinds. At the present time they will probably have done their businesses little harm and themselves much good.

FOOD FROM THE ROADSIDE WASTE

TO the kindness of a subscriber we are indebted for this very instructive picture of a piece of roadside waste turned into a vegetable garden. The original drawing was made for the express purpose of demonstrating the practicability of using such land. The application of the lesson should be very wide indeed. The land in question is in Hertfordshire, but there are few counties in England where the same state of things does not exist. At the present moment the sense of regret that such ground should be left to grow weeds and shelter vermin is deepened by the conditions incidental to war. A good attempt has

appear to have smothered everything else. In pre-war times the roadmen kept all these things under a certain amount of control. They cut down the nettles and the thistles just at the right moment; that is to say, before they seeded and after the sap of the year was beginning to show signs of exhaustion. Nowadays men cannot be spared for this work, nor has the farmer labour or time for it either. Except where the land is very neglected he has, indeed, reduced the hedges to the dimensions he likes, and we know of at least one farmer who has employed German prisoners to mow the wayside bracken and other rank herbage with the intent

of carrying it into his stables and cowhouses to be used for bedding, and thus ultimately to increase the bulk of a manure heap that continually becomes more and more valuable to the farmer. But he is an exception. The rule is for the fine grass and wild clover to be cut by those who are short of feed for their animals, while the rest of the herbage is left to wither and die on the stalk. A little intelligent work might easily convert these unsightly wastes into tidy and fruitful vegetable plots. The matter was mentioned two or three years ago, and we believe arrangements were made whereby those ready to undertake such cultivation could have facilities for dealing with such land. The process by which this particular plot was brought into cultivation could be repeated anywhere. In February last the grass was removed and the ground first of all ploughed. Then it was dug over twice and manured, farmyard manure being employed chiefly, and a certain amount of very old acetylene gas lime and a dressing of Vaporite were applied. Thereafter autumn-sown brussels sprouts and cabbage plants were at once planted, and later on parsnips were sown and potatoes put in. Vegetable marrows were grown with the potatoes, and giant Russian sunflowers were raised under glass and afterwards planted out with the intention of using the seed for poultry. The extent of the allotment is about twenty poles, and the use of it was granted through the courtesy of the Hertfordshire County Council at the nominal charge of one shilling a year.

It might, perhaps, be argued that in these days when pasture is greatly

reduced, it would be better to leave the wayside for grazing animals for which the owners had not sufficient meadow. But this on various grounds is undesirable. Just now, owing to the scarcity of horsemen and to the most skilful being taken away for the Army, animal diseases have increased largely in the villages and on the farms. Many of these are infectious, and it is very obvious that cows and other animals grazing along the road might give any disease they have to those in the fields. There is a hedge between them, but cows and other cattle taken out to graze on the high road will at times make friends with those in the fields and may be seen with their necks stretched over the hedge licked and being licked, than which nothing is more calculated to spread infectious disease. It is the



From a drawing by A. A. WAYSIDE ALLOTMENT IN HERTFORDSHIRE.

H. Randall.

been made to maintain the great high roads in workable condition despite the scarcity of labour and the need of avoiding local expenditure. But the lanes have been very sadly neglected, those in Hertfordshire more so than in some counties. There are miles and miles of them where the road is bordered on both sides by several yards of grassy waste. Grass is the most prevalent plant, but in travelling along one of them there is found every now and then long areas in which bramble, wild rose, hedge oak, seedling ash and other timber trees combine to make a wilderness. At another spot thistles grow in variety, and in a short while the autumn winds will be carrying the thistledown over acres of ploughed land. At still another spot nettles have become the dominant plant and spread by root and seed till they

same with the still more companionable horse. He will, on very slight provocation, put his head over the hedge to make friends with his own species on the other side, and the moment they get into touch the danger of spreading infectious disease begins. It behoves us at the moment to take every precaution against this. Another objection to allowing animals to feed on the roadside is that they are under a severe temptation to enter fields or gardens, where they will do more harm in an hour than a vegetarian householder would do in six months. Those who live near such grass bordered lanes

can speak with the knowledge born of experience, for hawkers, gipsy in their habits if not in their blood, love to pitch their camps in secluded parts of the lanes at night. Then they turn out their horses or other animals in their possession to graze, and unless gates are very carefully attended to it will be found that these have entered forbidden ground before the morning. It has become far from uncommon recently for caravans of this kind to carry with them a flock of laying hens which, turned out on the roadsides, become depredators in their turn.

THE CORN-GROWING DOWNS

A gentle breeze on the Channel borne,
As music sighed in the ripened corn,
And the golden bourn of eve was set
Athwart the long-dying day's regret :
Whilst the waiting harvest beneath the skies
Rejoiced as a field of Paradise.

We had climbed the crest of the chalk-cleft hill,
By a way bereft of wood and rill :
And undominion'd by the Down,
The far-away mists enrobed the town,
Where welcomed the gladdened harvest's store,
The toils of the year that had gone before ;
As to and fro the throng'd street
The people pressed with wearied feet ;
And deaf to the corn-field's listless tune,
Unread in the old Earth's ancient rune,
That when all is said, and all is done
Life and the corn and the harvests are one.

ELINOR BETHELL.

LONDON'S MEETING PLACES

BY THOMAS BURKE.

ALTHOUGH London possesses a thousand central points suitable for a street rendezvous, Londoners seem, by tacit agreement, to have selected only five of these for their outdoor appointments. They are : Charing Cross Post Office, Leicester Square Tube, Piccadilly Tube, under the clock at Victoria, and Oxford Circus Tube ; and I have never known my friends telephone me for a meeting and fix any rendezvous outside this list. Indeed, I can now, by long experience, place the habits and character of casual acquaintances who wish to see me, from their choice among these places.

For example, a Charing Cross Post Office appointment means a pleasure appointment. Here, at one o'clock on Saturday afternoon, wait the bright girls and golden boys, their faces, like living lamps, shining through the cloud of pedestrians as a signal for that one for whom they wait. And, though you be late in keeping the appointment, you may be certain that the waiting party will be in placid mood. There is so much to distract and delight you on this small corner. There are the bustle of the Strand and the stopping 'buses ; the busy sweep of Trafalgar Square, so spacious that its swift stream of traffic suggests leisure ; the hot smell of savouries rising from the kitchens of Morley's Hotel ; and the cynical amusement to be drawn from a study of the meetings and encounters of other waiting folk. Hundreds of appointments have I kept at Charing Cross Post Office. I have met soldier-friends there after an absence of three years. I have met cousins and sisters and aunts, and damsels who stood not in any of these relations. And I have met The Only One there many, many times ; often happily, often in trepidation, and sometimes in lyrical ecstasy, as when a quarrel and a long parting have received the benison of reconciliation. Now I can never pass the Post Office without a tremor, for its swart, squat exterior is, for me, bowered with delicious thrills.

But never keep an appointment under the clock at Victoria. A meeting here is fatal to the intercourse to follow. Always he or she who arrives first will be peevish by the time the second party turns up, for Victoria Station, with its lowering roof, affects you with a frightful sense of being shut in and smothered. Turn how you will, sharply or gently, and you cannon with some other petulant human, and, retiring apologetically from him, you impale your kidney region on some fool's walking-stick or umbrella. That fool asks you to look where you're going, and then he gets his from a truckload of luggage. You laugh—bitterly.

After three minutes of waiting in that violet-tinted beehive you loathe your fellow-man ; you loathe the entire animal kingdom. You "come over in one of them prickly 'eats." Your nerves flap about you like bits of bunting, and the new spring suit that set in such fine lines seems fit only for scaring birds. Then your friend arrives, and God help him if he's late.

I have watched these Victoria appointments many times while waiting for my train. The first party to the contract arrives, glances at the clock and strolls to the book-stall, cheerfully swinging stick or umbrella. He strolls back to the clock, glances, compares it with his watch. Hums a bar or two. Coughs. A flicker of dismay shades his face. Then a handicapped runner for the 6.15 crashes violently against him in avoiding a platoon of soldiers, and knocks his hat over his eyes and his stick ten yards away. When the great big world stops turning and he finds a voice, the offender has gone. The next glance he shoots at the clock is choleric. A slight prod from an old lady who wishes to find the main booking office produces a waterspout of fury ; and the comedy ends with a whirling departure, in the course of which he gets a little of his own back on others of his species. His final glance at the clock is charged with the pure essence of malevolence.

How much more gracious is an appointment in the great resounding hall of Euston, though this is mainly a travellers' rendezvous and seldom used for general meetings. Here, cloistered from the rush and roar of the station proper, yet always with a cheerful sense of loud neighbourhood, the cathedral mood is induced. You become benign, Gothic. There are pleasant straw seats. There are writing-tables with real ink. There are noble photographs of English beauty spots, and—oh, heaps of dinky little models of railway trains and Irish Channel steamers which light up when you drop pennies in the slots. Vast, serene and dignified is this rendezvous. It always reminds me of the Athenæum Club ; and, howsoever protracted your vigil, it showers upon you something of its quality, so that, though your friend be twenty minutes late, you still receive him affably and talk in conversational tones of this and of that instead of roaring the obvious like a baseball fan, as Victoria's hall demands. You may even make subtle epigrams at Euston, and your friend will take their point. I'd like to hear someone try to convey a fine shade of meaning in Victoria.

Oxford Circus Tube is always, to me, the meeting ground of the suburban "flapper" and the suburban shopping mamma. Its note is little swinging skirts and artful silk stockings,

and shining curls that dance to the sober music of the matron's rustling satin. The waiting dames carry those dinky little brown paper bags stamped with the name of some Oxford Street draper, and the idler may amuse himself by guessing at their contents—a ribbon, a camisole, a flower-spray for a hat, gloves, or those odd lengths of cloth and linen which women will buy—though Lord knows to what esoteric use they put them. Hither come, too, those lonely people who, through the medium of "Companionship" columns or "Correspondence" circles, have found a congenial soul. Why they choose Oxford Circus I don't know, but they are always to be seen there. You may recognise the type at first glance. They peer and scan closely every arrival, for, though correspondence has introduced them to the other soul, they have not yet seen the body, and they are searching for someone to fit the description that has been supplied, as thus: "I am of medium height and shall be wearing a black hat trimmed with Michaelmas daisies, and a fawn mackintosh"; or, "I am tall and shall be wearing a grey suit and black soft hat and spectacles, and will carry a copy of the *Buff Review* in my hand." One is pleased to speculate on the result of the meeting. Is it horrible disillusion, or does the flint find its steel and produce the true spark? Do they thereafter look happily upon the Oxford Circus Tube, or pass it with a shudder?

The crowd that hovers about the Leicester Square Tube entrances affords little matter for reflection. It is so obvious. It is so Leicester Square-like. It alternately snarls and leers. It never truly smiles: it is so tired of the smiling business. The loud garb of the women tells its own tale.

For the rest there are bejewelled black men, a few Australian and Belgian soldiers, and a few disgruntled and "shopless" actors. I never accept an appointment at Leicester Square Tube. It puts me off the lunch or dinner or whatever business was the object of the meeting. It is ignoble, squalid, with a sickly air of decency about it.

A few yards further westward, at Piccadilly Tube, the atmosphere changes. One tastes the ampler ether and diviner air. It does not, like Charing Cross Post Office, sing April and May; rather the mellowness of August and September. Good solid people meet here; people "comfortably off," as the phrase goes; people who have lived largely but have not lost their capacity for deliberate enjoyment. At meal-times they gather thickly: quiet, dainty women, obese majors, Government officials, and that nondescript type that wears shabby, well cut clothes with an air of prosperity and breeding. You may almost name the first words that will be spoken when a couple meet: "Well, where shall we go? Trocadero, Criterion—or Soho?" There is little hilarity; people don't "let themselves go" at this rendezvous. They are out for entertainment, but it is mild, well-ordered entertainment. The note of the crowd is: "If a thing is worth doing at all, it is worth doing well," even if the thing is only a hurried lunch or a curfew-rationed theatre.

Classifying London's meeting places by their moral atmospheres, I would mark Charing Cross Post Office as juvenile, Oxford Circus Tube as youth, Leicester Square Tube as senility, Piccadilly Tube as middle-age, the Great Hall at Euston as reverend seniority, and Victoria Station—well, Victoria Station should get a total rejection certificate.

A MONOGRAPH OF THE PHEASANTS

THE first volume of Mr. William Beebe's "Monograph of the Pheasants" is now on sale and the remaining three volumes are promised as soon as possible. The edition, published under the auspices of the New York Zoological Society by Messrs. Witherby & Co., is limited to 600 numbered sets, of which only a portion will be available for sale in the British Empire at £12 10s. a volume.

The price of £50 may appear prohibitive, especially in war time, but in this connection it is interesting to note that a copy of Dr. D. G. Elliot's "Monograph of the Phasianidæ," 1870-2, the only work of a similar nature and style, fetched £62 at Messrs. Christie's Red Cross sale in the summer of 1918. Dr. Elliot's book, which was illustrated by the incomparable ornithological artist, Josef Wolf, is now nearly fifty years old and comprised only 154 pages and 81 plates. The work now under review will occupy four volumes, each containing from 200 to 250 pages of letterpress, and illustrated by nearly 100 coloured plates of birds and as many photo-gravures of their haunts.

The literature on the subject is already vast, and this has been laboriously studied by the author, who has devoted some eight years to the preparation of his monograph. But perhaps the greatest value of this comprehensive work lies in the fact that he not only consulted the great type collections in the museums of London, Tring, Paris and Berlin, but also personally visited over twenty countries, including Ceylon, India, Burma, China, Japan, the Malay States, Borneo and Java, in search of first-hand information concerning the habits of pheasants in their natural environments. His travels through Asia and the East Indies occupied seventeen months.

The work owes its inception to the generosity of Col. Anthony R. Kuser, of Bernardsville, New Jersey, who suggested that a monograph of the entire family of the pheasants should be undertaken and who supported both the exploration and subsequent publication in the most complete manner. The expediency of the work was considered urgent from the fact that many of the Phasianidæ are rapidly becoming extinct, and it was therefore thought high time that the record of their

habits and surroundings, which is important to the understanding of their structure and evolution, should be compiled. As the author himself puts it:

the terrible history being made in Europe will mean a new lease of life to the creatures of the Eastern jungles. . . . This breathing-space, this far-flung influence of war, may be the last pause in the slow, certain kismet which, from the ultimate increase and spread of mankind, must result finally in the total extinction of these splendid birds.

From a utilitarian point of view the pheasants comprise one species, the Red Junglefowl (*Gallus Gallus*), which leads all birds in value to man. As the ancestor of every variety

of domestic poultry the bird is of inestimable importance. From a wild Junglehen, which lays at the utmost forty or fifty eggs in the course of her life, domestic birds have been derived which are veritable egg machines, a single hen producing, according to Mr. Beebe, as many as 3,000 eggs.

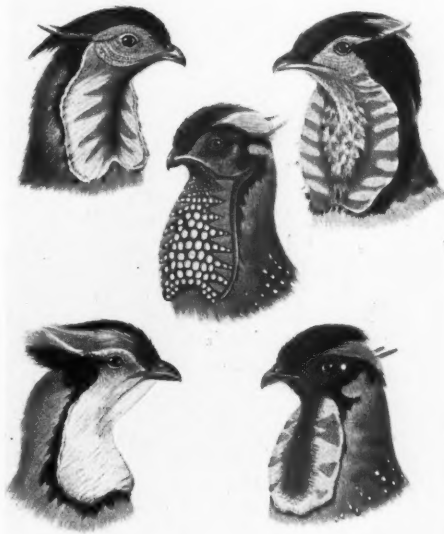
For the reader interested in keeping and breeding the various members of the Phasianidæ the author has included a *résumé* of the best methods in use, both on large preserves and estates, as well as in small aviaries. For the naturalist and sportsman, stories and detailed directions for the shooting of the pheasants in their native lands have been collated, while legends and native superstitions round out the account of the relations of these birds to mankind.

Mr. Beebe, in the classification of the family, was often baffled by the apparent generic relationships, but at last utilised a factor even more novel than that of the tail moult character of the sub-families. This

is geographic distribution, and he found that the purposes of taxonomy were constantly fulfilled by refusing to include, in any single genus, species whose ranges coincided or overlapped. He emphasises the fact that

the uselessness of the egg markings for purposes of classification will be evident at a glance, although in some groups of birds it is a valuable minor character of relationship.

The plate illustrating seventeen eggs of eleven species of Pheasants, admirably painted by Mr. H. Gronvold, shows the close resemblance of some of these eggs to those of the Capercaillie and the Black Grouse and serves as proof of the near



WATTLES OF COCK TRAGOPANS.

affinity *ab ovo* of the Phasianidae to the Tetraonidae. The author recognises 19 genera, 80 species, and about 108 forms, of which the Blood Partridges (*Ithagenes*) with nine forms, the Tragopans (*Tragopan*) with six forms, the Impeyans (*Impeyanus*) with three forms and the Eared Pheasants (*Crossoptilon*) with three forms, are dealt with in this volume.

Personally I have met very few of these species in a wild state. One of the most bitter minor disappointments of my life was experienced in Kashmir in the winter of 1904. I had tracked a party of Impeyan pheasants in a wood which ran for several hundred yards up a steep ravine. The ground was covered deep in snow, and climbing, in the rarefied air, was most arduous; but the tracks of the pheasants showed that they were numerous and that they were cocks. The opportunity of obtaining a specimen was one not to be lost, and, sending a few natives into the wood as beaters, I kept to the left and proceeded to "walk up" the covert. In many places the snow came above my knees and I fell, more than once, over fallen tree trunks hidden by the snow. The ravine terminated in a sheer precipice of rock over which I felt sure that the pheasants would not attempt to fly, and, counting on their breaking back over my head, I took up my stand, fairly exhausted, some eighty yards from the rock. My disappointment may be imagined when, after a few minutes, seven magnificent cock Impeyans flew past me, one by one, almost touching the rock and therefore out of range; thus, by not plodding on a few yards farther, I missed the chance of a lifetime.

Mr. Beebe describes his travels in very graphic style, as will be gathered from the quotations printed below. Coloured plates do not readily lend themselves to reproduction in black and white, and for this reason our reproduction of "Wattles of cock Tragopans" (pl. ix) gives but an inadequate notion of the vivid pigments and curious patterns of these wonderful structures. They make, perhaps, the most striking picture in the volume. The coloured plate reproduced on this page is that of the "Satyr Tragopan" (pl. vii):

The place is Sikkim in the Eastern Himalayas, looking towards Kabru and Kinchinjunga; the time is early May at ten thousand feet, when spring is at its height. The Satyr Tragopans have finished their courtship and paired, and in a few days will begin to nest. From some mossy perch the booming crescendo challenge of the cock rings out every morning. Around him the rhododendron trees are masses of colour—scarlet, salmon, cerise, pink and rose, and beneath, the ground is lavendered with alpine primroses. Words can never describe the beauty of this magnificent bird in its Himalayan home.

A very good notion of the nature of this Himalayan country is given by excellent photogravures and the accompanying description:

"The Eastern Himalayas" (photogravure 1): The most wonderful scene in the world is the Himalayan snows from Darjeeling. Sitting at the edge of the moss-hung forest at about seven thousand feet, one sees, through a filigree of tree ferns, range after range, extending through green and blue and purple distances up to the sharp edge of the snowline. The apex of all is Kinchinjunga, with beautifully draped Kabru far to the left. Six species of pheasants live in these glorified hills. In the deeper valleys, where the chill of the snows never comes, are Red Junglefowl and Peafowl. In the upper forest. Black-backed Kaleege roost and nest. Still higher, near the snows, at nine

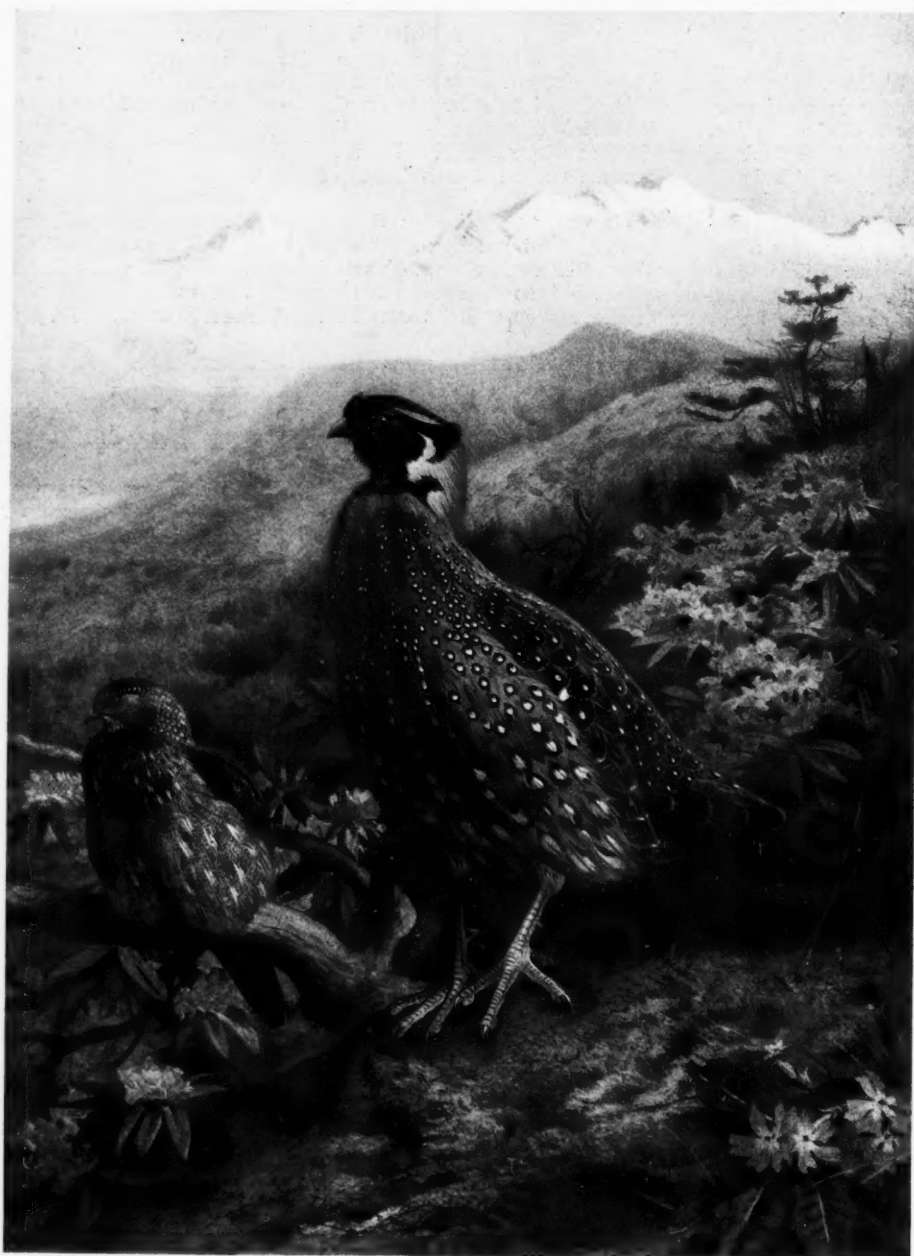
or ten thousand feet, are the Satyr Tragopans and the Impeyans—most gorgeous of birds. The last of the sextet lives at fourteen or fifteen thousand feet—at the very edge of the snows. This is the Blood Partridge.

And again:

"Western Himalayan Home of the Impeyan" (photogravure 10): Two miles above the sea; in the coniferous forests of Garwhal. Between a jagged bit of rock and a sturdy deodar I crouched early in the morning, every needle and leaf about me drenched with dew. Behind were six ranges of mountains, dropping away from the fathomless valley at my feet, and yet rising even higher and higher to the distant Tibetan snows.

The only photogravure in this volume showing a nest and eggs *in situ* is entitled

"Nest and Eggs of the Impeyan" (photogravure 11): At the base of a weather-beaten stub, half hidden in a mass of Himalayan ivy and maiden-hair fern,



THE SATYR TRAGOPAN.

a hen Impeyan had made her nest. She would never have been revealed had not a Crested Tit discovered and scolded her. In the cool air of these high Garwhalese forests I watched the bird day after day. During her brief absence I photographed the two great spotted eggs. The succeeding day I surprised a group of bandar-log—the great grey Langur monkeys—and one of them had stolen the spotted eggs and was climbing up a slanting tree trunk. The lives of the two young Impeyans were thus snuffed out; the spring courtship, the battles of the cock, the care on the part of the patient mother, all had been of no avail.

Mr. Beebe writes of the Brown-eared Pheasant:

Its haunts are guarded neither by dense tropical jungle nor savage tribes, but by bleak inhospitable wastes, where shelter and food are unknown. . . . To find the birds themselves, one must leave all attendants behind and search day after day over the semi-barren tundras, hiding behind scrubby growths of vegetation to scan every rock and shadow.

Another photogravure shows

"The Haunts of the Brown Eared-Pheasant" (photogravure 14): A thousand photographs of the homes of this bird would seem to be nothing more than pictures of the same place. There is nothing more to be seen than coarse grass and straggling weed, touched by scattered flowers in the spring, and covered lightly by drifting snow in the early autumn. The bare rocks are lichenized and have become the colour of half-frozen soil. In such an environment the Eared Pheasant lives happily and holds its own even against the Chinese pot-hunter, the circling eagles and the stealthy leopards. Only the vast extent of these desert regions and the wandering habits of the birds have saved them from complete extinction.

Mr. Beebe had more than one exciting experience, as, for example, his "ugly adventure" with a King Cobra which he actually handled while crawling and stumbling through a dense thicket of bananas. This adventure, however, terminated happily in his being able to see and shoot "the first wild Scater's Impeyan ever seen by a white man."

As will have been seen from the above extracts, the author has the happy knack of transporting his readers to the localities he describes; and he has been ably assisted by the artists who illustrate his work. The nineteen coloured plates in this volume are by Messrs. G. E. Lodge (8), A. Thorburn (6), H. Gronvold (4), and C. R. Knight (1), and from the prospectus it appears that the services of Mr. L. A. Fuertes and Major H. Jones will be utilised in subsequent volumes. To my mind, it always seems desirable that illustrations to works of this kind should be by but one artist; no two artists express themselves in the same way and their different styles can only lead to comparisons which are odious. It must be regretfully noted that the most pleasing reproductions are the work of a Berlin firm; but this is not surprising since it is undeniable that as a photo-colour printer the German is *facile princeps*. The value of all the plates would have been considerably increased if the scale to which the birds have been drawn had been added.

The sixteen photogravures illustrating the natural environments of the Pheasants in a wild state are not always convincing, but some, such as those referred to in detail above, are typical of the scenery among which these birds are to be found. A feature

of the work is a series of diagrammatic maps showing the distribution of various species. Of the five maps appearing in this volume, one is especially interesting as illustrating the distribution of the Phasianidæ as a whole.

The volume now to hand is sufficient to justify the claim set forth in the prospectus, that the monograph presents a very strong sentimental appeal to all bird lovers; it would



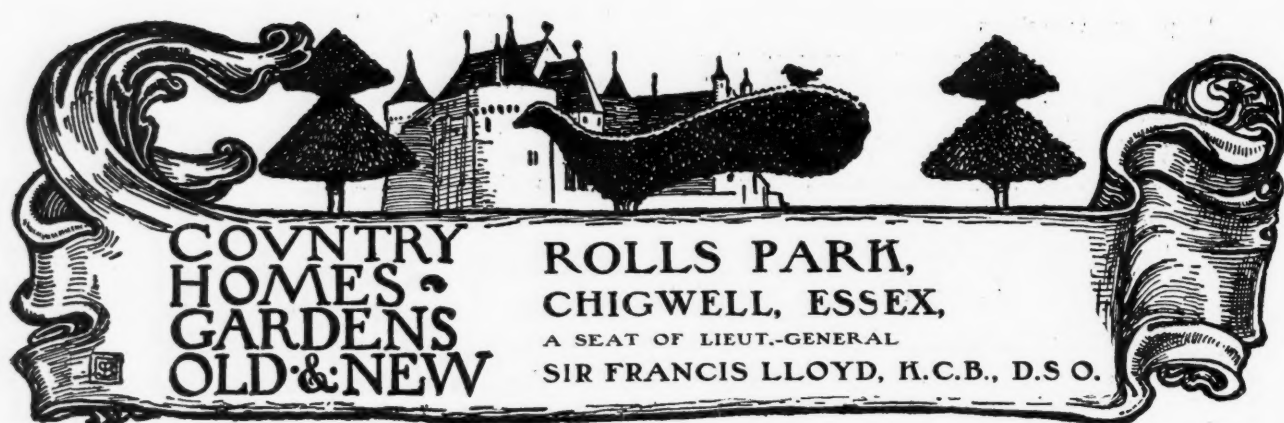
THE BROWN EARED-PHEASANT.



THE WHITE EARED-PHEASANT.

certainly appear desirable in every way, both from the ornithologist's and the book collector's point of view. Time alone will show whether its purchase will prove as good a speculation as did an investment in Dr. D. G. Elliot's "Monograph of the Phasianidæ," but hesitating purchasers may be well advised to consider the imminent prospects of the Luxury Tax. There can be no question that Mr. Beebe's "Monograph of the Pheasants" will rank as the standard work on the subject.

H. S. G



CONSIDERING that Chigwell is less than fifteen miles from the heart of London, its untouched rurality is a constant cause of wonderment. So many outlying villages further off have been invaded by the tide of bricks and mortar that a visit paid thirty-three years ago to the village made famous by Dickens's "Barnaby Rudge" prepared one for the sickening changes one knows so well to expect. Great was the relief to find that Chigwell stands where she did, not only thirty-three, but a much longer term of years ago. Its mediæval church is there, with a well remembered Norman doorway and a fifteenth century roof and bell turret. Opposite is still that famous Elizabethan hostelry, the King's Head, that Dickens weaves so skilfully into the plot of his eighteenth century romance, only changing its name to The Maypole; and the long, winding village street still retains its embowered ancient houses, with a Jacobean bargeboard here and a Georgian door-head there, to gladden the heart of an antiquary. Mellow red brickwork in walls and chimneys, wrought iron gates and dormer windows set in wavy old tiled roofs peep out cheerfully from the fresh spring foliage—a happy alliance: age and wisdom with youth and beauty.

All this is an appropriate introduction to the historic house that lies on the northern outskirts of the village—Rolls

Park, also immortalised by Dickens under the guise of The Warren. There was doubtless an earlier house upon the site, but the oldest parts of the present structure date from about 1600, and may have been built in the last years of Elizabeth's reign, or very early in that of James I. The Harvey family was then in possession, and the father of the celebrated William Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, built the house that we now see, or, rather, the older parts of it. He was a substantial yeoman, and his other sons were London merchants of weight. His more famous son was no doubt frequently here, but most of his strenuous life in the cause of physiology and science was spent elsewhere, from his birth at Folkestone, in 1578, to his death in 1657. In his latter years he resided at Burwash, in Sussex, but he is recorded to have stayed a good deal with one or other of his brothers, now become very wealthy men, and so we may think of him as being a frequent guest at Rolls Park between 1646, when he left Oxford for London, and 1657.

The portraits of his parents, in oblong canvases, are framed into the wall of the Music Room, in such a way as to form part of the permanent wall decoration of that exceptionally handsome apartment, together with a number of their sons and other descendants in later generations, mostly painted on oval canvases, all being bordered with elegant



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ROLLS PARK: THE GARDEN FRONT.

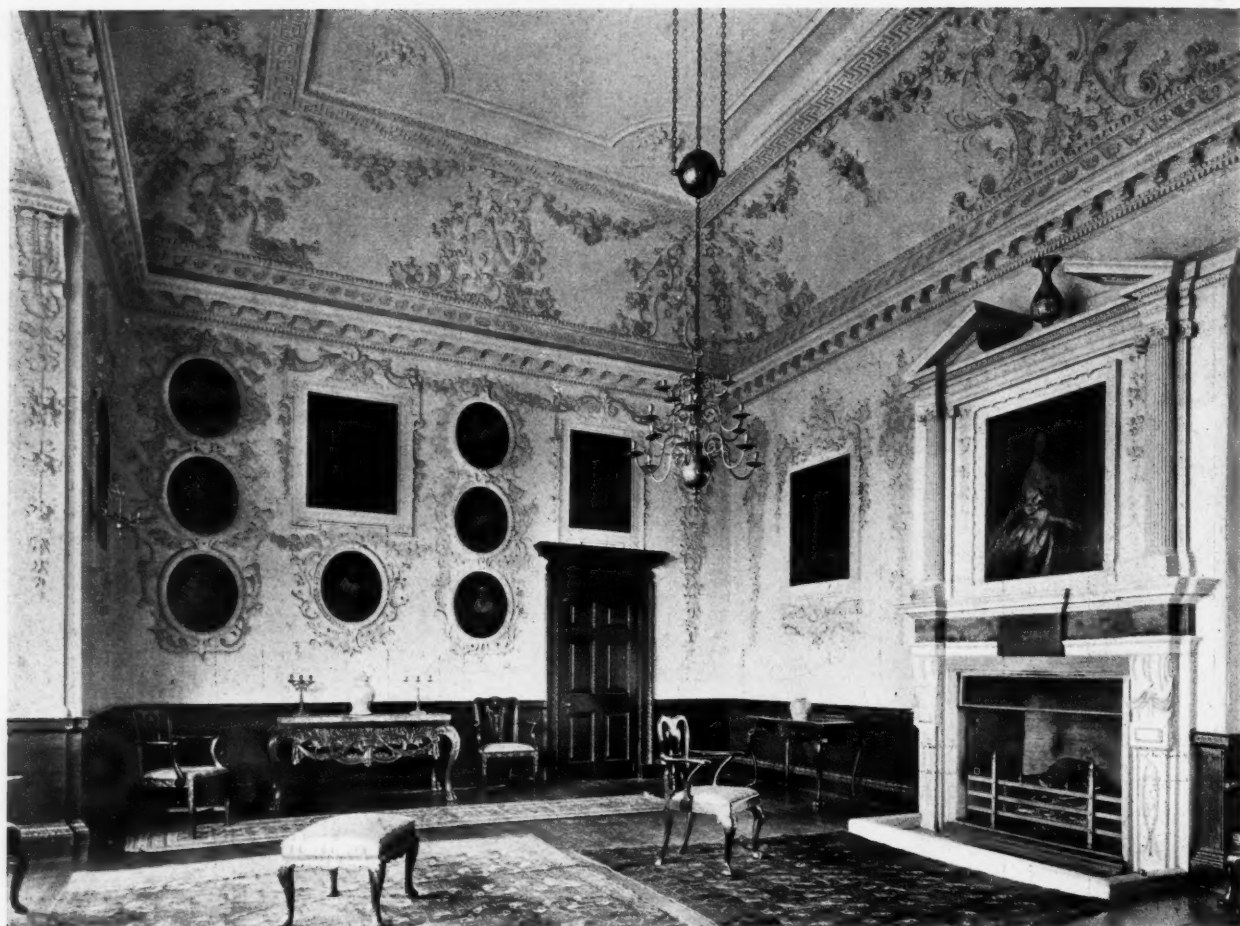
"COUNTRY LIFE."



Copyright.

THE MUSIC ROOM: A FAMILY GROUP INCLUDING SIR ELIAB HARVEY AS A BOY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



Copyright.

THE MUSIC ROOM WITH THE EARLIEST GROUP OF PORTRAITS.

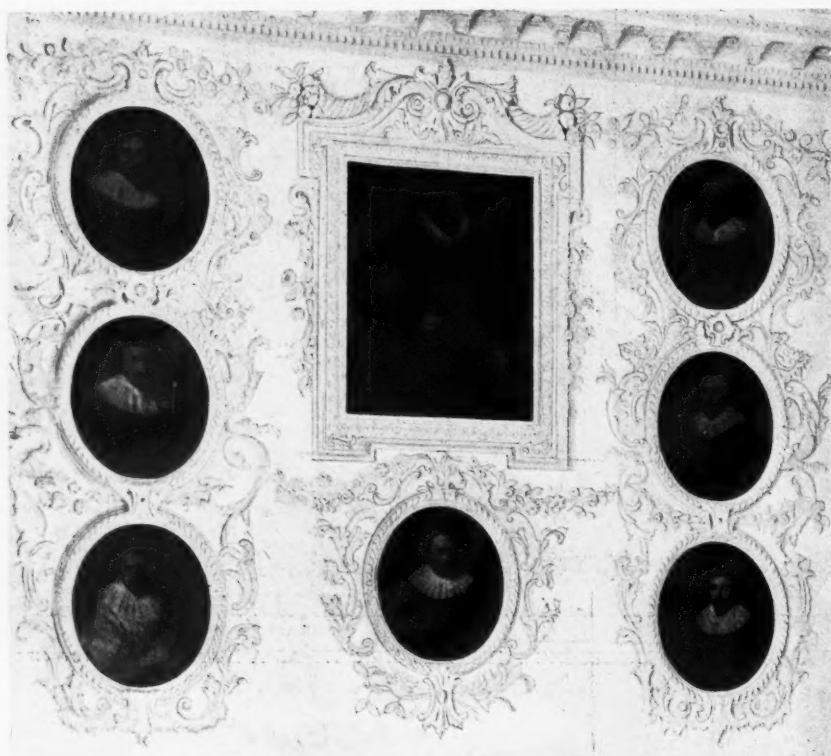
"COUNTRY LIFE."

ornamental plasterwork in the rococo style. One is reminded of the naughty couplet about Mary Anne, "gone to the bosom of Abraham"—"It's all very well for Mary Anne, but it isn't so pleasant for Abraham." Decoratively the scheme is charming, "but it isn't so pleasant" for the pictures themselves. Being fixed to some framework behind the plaster setting they cannot, apparently, be got at for cleaning or repair, and not only are they very black with exposure to the

air, but in more than one a disfiguring green mould, indicative of damp, covers the surface.

The original plan of the house seems to have been an oblong, with projecting wings to the principal or north front, to which a long kitchen wing on the west and the drawing-room, orangery, etc., were added as a prolongation of the south front westwards. Beyond the projecting wings on the north, with their great chimney-stacks, some other stacks and leaded windows, seen from an internal "well," or courtyard, there is little external evidence of the early seventeenth century date of the house. Internally there is a fireplace in the hall, of clunch, with a wide "Tudor" or four-centred head, and some good oak panelling with a fine figure—but this seems to be an importation from a neighbouring farmhouse. On the upper floors are two delightful Jacobean staircases; one more elaborate than the other, with Tudor roses carved on the "drops." The large square newels are flat-topped with a bold torus moulding, and the balusters are of square form, with particularly good mouldings. It would be difficult to point to a better model for a simple staircase.

The grand staircase from the ground to the first floor, approached from the inner hall, is a vastly more important affair: the design very elaborate, the carving exceptionally sumptuous. The newels here take the form of massive square pedestals with spreading base, sub-base and plinth. The cappings are also heavily moulded, and the pedestals are reproduced in the wall dado by shallow pilasters of the same height and section, all being crowned by vases of fruit and flowers, realistically carved in high relief. The stair-carriages are carved with heavy swags, beneath a moulded capping;



THE EARLIEST PORTRAITS OF THE HARVEYS IN THE MUSIC ROOM.

and in place of the usual balusters the space between the massive handrail and this moulded capping is filled with very lovely carved scrollwork of rich foliage, varied in design, a quaint cherub being introduced in the first floor landing. All is now painted in a treacly shade of brown, and the suggestion—quite unwarranted—is that much of the actual material underneath is a plaster or modelled stucco; but as a matter of fact there is every reason to believe that it is mixed oak and pine, which would be much better worth looking at than the paint, detracting, as it does, from the crispness of the unusually fine carving; a judiciously applied pickling would be greatly to its advantage. The date of this beautiful staircase may be put between 1660 and 1690. There are few to beat it, in houses of this scale, for design and for comfortable planning; the easy rise, the breadth of tread, and the wide spacing are as noteworthy as the carved work and the graceful ramping of the handrail. Happily, the owner, Sir Francis Lloyd, and the tenants, Mr. and Lady Sybil Vivian Smith, are appreciative guardians of this gem of old English woodwork.

How much of the structure may have been added or remodelled when this grand staircase was put in it is difficult now to say, but we may safely assume that a good deal of structural work, of a character not easily distinguishable from the earlier and later periods, was carried out during the last thirty or forty years of the seventeenth century; and the exceptionally fine carved pine mantelpieces in some of the bedrooms, if not coeval works, are but little later. The best of these are (1) in the Rose Room, with a blank panel for a picture, consoles and swags of fruit and flowers and pendants of laurel leaves bound with a ribbon; (2) in the West Room, a somewhat similar design, but with Ionic capitals combined with monsters' heads above the laurel pendants, and an old picture of Daniel in the lions' den, framed in the space above; (3) in the Blue Room, with long foliage pendants in the flanking pilasters, a panel for a picture, and large voluted terminations to the architraves at the floor level. This and No. 2 have white marble borders to the fireplace opening. There is a much loftier design, of Georgian date, c. 1750, in one of the first floor rooms, which also has a blank picture panel. The Chinese Room has another later type of fireplace in marble and painted pine.

The planning, and to a large extent the construction, of the ground floor dates from the great remodelling that the house underwent in about 1770. It was then that the fine Music Room, two storeys high, at the south-east angle was formed within the Jacobean walls, the windows to north and west on the two floors being made dummies and all the lighting obtained from a large three-sided bay on the east front. The actual floor over the ground storey must have been taken out to gain the desired height, and the noble room some 21ft. in height, fashioned with a coved ceiling of festooned plaster enrichment rising from a modillion cornice. The chimneypiece of Parian and coloured marbles has a large wooden overmantel with a "broken" pediment, Ionic columns and much carved and composition enrichment; and framed in it is a Georgian lady of the Harvey family. A gentleman of the same period is framed against the wall in an enriched plaster setting on the left, and another of earlier date to the right; while on the north, similarly framed into the wall, is a large canvas with an interesting family group, in which one recognises the lady over the fireplace



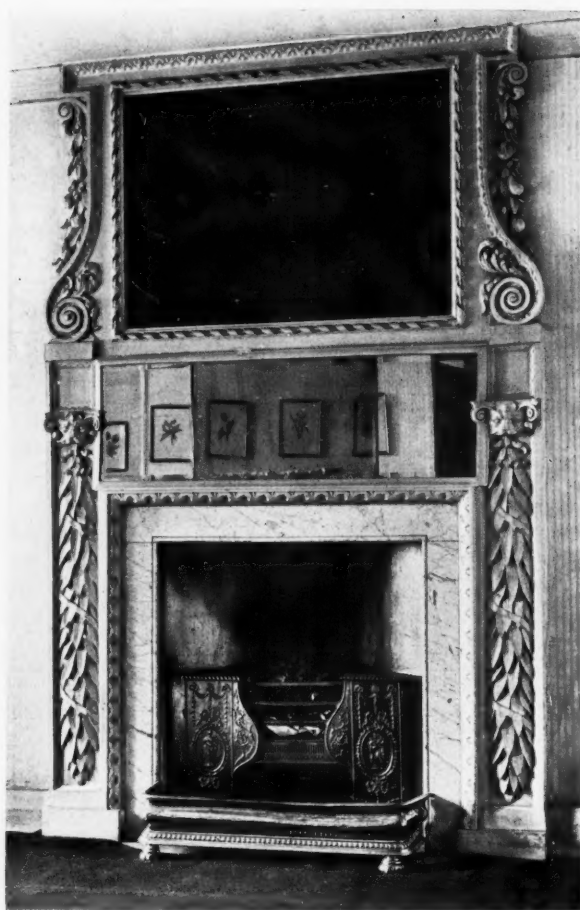
Copyright. THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY STAIRCASE. "C.L."



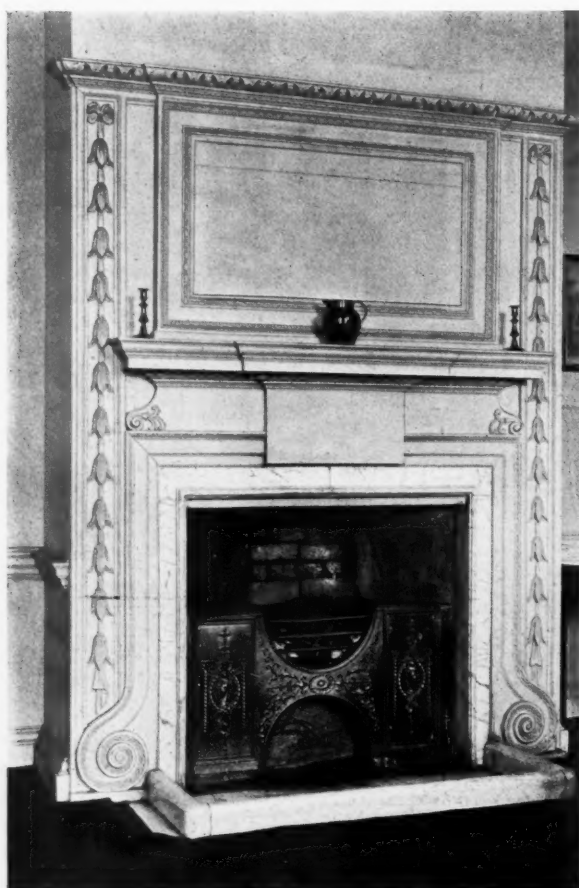
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A GEORGIAN MANTELPIECE, FIRST FLOOR.



MANTELPIECE, WEST ROOM.



Copyright. MANTELPIECE IN THE BLUE ROOM.



MANTELPIECE IN THE ROSE ROOM. "C.L."

in an earlier stage and a bright, alert little boy, afterwards Sir Eliab Harvey, who served so gallantly under Nelson in "The Fighting Temeraire," immortalised in Turner's picture in the National Gallery. The picture itself, painted and exhibited by Turner in the Royal Academy of 1839, records that great incident of Trafalgar, October 21st, 1805, when the *Temeraire*, a line-of-battleship of 98 guns, captured from the French in the Battle of the Nile, August 1st, 1798, fought next to Nelson's ship, the *Victory*, Captain Harvey, as he then was, being her commander. The picture was offered,



Copyright. DRAWING-ROOM MANTELPIECE. "C.L."

in the early Fifties, to Mrs. Lloyd of Aston, grandmother of the present owner, for the sum of £150, and refused, as she did not care for Turner's pictures.

These, together with two pictures right and left of the bay window, and the before-mentioned group of earliest portraits framed into the south wall, constitute an exceptionally interesting series of family pictures. It may be remarked, however, that not only is their framing into the wall injudicious, but whoever planned it can have thought nothing of the proper lighting of his pictures: those on the east and south walls are particularly ill placed for being seen.

The smoking-room, which is separated by the inner hall from the Music Room, the vestibule to the garden entrance, a little ante-chamber, the drawing-room, dining-room and orangery, form together a great front in one continuous line to the south, or garden, side of the house; and the whole stretch was an addition or a remodelling of older work, perhaps done at more than one date in the latter half of the eighteenth century. A noteworthy feature of these later rooms is the elaborate ornamentation of the dados and the doors and windows, the casings of which and the framework of the doors are richly moulded with flutings, pateræ and minute suites of mouldings. There is a yet more ornate example of this treatment in the Music Room. In the drawing-room is a notable mantelpiece of white marble, with pairs of *amorini* in roundels, and rams' heads on the consoles. The dining-room has a similar but plainer fireplace.

Opposite to the house on the north is a fine range of seventeenth century stabling and in the yard a lead cistern, on the ornamented front of which appears the date 1751. There are the stables which in Dickens's novel are supposed to escape the burning of

the house by the Gordon rioters. Adjoining is the spacious brewhouse which in our forefathers' days was as essential an adjunct to a house of any pretensions as the stabling.

The high, old brick walls of the extensive gardens and orchards, the lovely wistaria that covers part of the servants' wing, the masses of lupins and violas—seen in perfection on a perfect day of May—and the undulating country that surrounds the house, with noble elms and specimen trees in great variety: all these enhance the charm of restful, old-world peace that seems to brood over Rolls Park. To the present writer the memory of it will always be linked with that of a very fascinating child-guide—a born antiquary if ever there were one, dowered with exceptional gifts of mind and body—a boy of eight, with the wisdom of riper years, of whom his parents may be justly proud.

PHILIP MAINWARING JOHNSTON.



A WILLIAM III PIECE IN THE INNER HALL.



Copyright.

THE STABLES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

ON FRENCH AND ENGLISH NURSERY RHYMES

BY EMILE CAMMAERTS.

THESE is no subject which one ought to approach with more reverence and awe than children's nursery rhymes, for they are the very essence of poetry and they defy intellectual criticism. One may imagine certain people for whom, owing to their special education or want of education, the greatest poems—even those of Homer, Dante and Shakespeare—remain sealed books; and who would still be able to feel poetry when confronted with it in life or nature. But if a man's soul is not stirred by the simplest and most childlike of the genuine folksongs of the nursery, he had better give up every hope of appreciating the inner meaning of the greatest verses ever written, for nursery rhymes are the beginning and the end of all poetry. They are sung to the children and carry with them the fancies and music of childhood. They preserve in their verses the perfume of the mysterious world from which all babies come and whose meadows extend in the kingdom of poetry, a kingdom which you cannot enter "unless you become as one of these little ones."

Let us ask ourselves what are the fundamental characteristics of poetry. Not love of nature—which may be just as well told in prose—not passion, which is often better expressed in drama, but surely music and imagination, the jingle of words for words' sake and the wild display of pictures for pictures' sake. Even the most exuberant wine songs, love songs, satiric songs do not combine to the same degree as nursery rhymes these two essential poetic qualities. They translate certain popular and healthy human feelings, passions and interests, and as such remain, to a certain extent, reasonable. They belong to the grown-ups, and grown-ups are but minor poets compared to children.

All genuine nursery rhymes, then, blend the musical and the fanciful inspiration. Some are more musical, others more fanciful. But though these proportions vary, the two characteristics can be found in every one of them and leave no room for any alien intrusion. Whenever such foreign elements can be discovered it will be found that the song did not belong at first to the nursery, but strayed there by chance. It is the case, for instance, in England, with "Where are you going to, my pretty maid?" which evidently belongs to the large family of popular love dialogues deriving from the mediaeval "pastourelle." It is the case also with "Hot cross buns"—a street cry—and with "Humpty Dumpty" and all the riddles which follow in his wake. In the same way, in France, some of the most popular nursery rhymes are merely naturalised or, if I might be allowed to coin the word, nurseried folk songs, either satiric, like "Malbrouck s'en va-t-en guerre," or "grivois," like "Au clair de la lune," whose last verse must necessarily be cut, since it hardly suits a nursery audience.

If we attempt a rough classification of the most popular nursery rhymes, we will find that the songs which revel most in the jingle of words, which are more musical than imaginative, is intimately bound up with certain physical movements, ranging from the rhythm of the cradle of the infant to that of the children's games. We will also perceive a close analogy between the children's songs of France and England, and very likely of the different countries of the world, for such traditions are common to mankind; and wherever children are to be found they insist on being rocked as soon as they can cry, and on dancing in a ring even before they can walk.

Whether the mother carries the baby in her arms or rocks him in the cradle the rhythm is the same, and the lullaby's essential purpose is to sway him to and fro in order to induce him to sleep and to stop crying. The big sister of greedy Colas who tells him:

Fais dodo, Colas, mon p'tit frère,
Fais dodo, t'auras du lolo.

and the English mother who whispers "Hush-a-by baby on the tree top" hope evidently to attain the same result, though the arguments they use are somewhat different.

A few months later the little one is taken on his mother's lap and "rides a cockhorse to Banbury Cross, to see a fine lady ride on a white horse." In France he goes

A Paris, à Paris,
Sur un petit cheval gris.
A Rouen, à Rouen,
Sur un petit cheval blanc.

and the emphatic swing of the last verse: "She shall have music wherever she goes," which brings the mite chuckling

with glee to a giddy galop, finds an exact counterpart in the French "Au pas, au pas, au trot, au galop, au galop" the song being abruptly brought to a close by the final catastrophe.

A few months later girls and boys—they are already girls and boys—hold each other by the hand and dance in a ring—"Ring a ring of roses." This simple form of the round with a final tumble down takes place in France on a meadow close to a windmill:

Meunier, tu dors,
Ton moulin va trop vite
Meunier, tu dors
Ton moulin va trop fort.

Presently the round is broken, to be taken up at every refrain, as in "Here we go round the mulberry bush," "Sur le Pont d'Avignon," "Savez-vous planter les choux," etc. The French is particularly rich in this kind of rounds, in which the children's fancy already finds a free outlet. In "Nous n'irons plus au bois" another child is brought into the dance at every new verse, so that, in the end, all have taken part in it. It is one of the finest and most characteristic pieces of the repertory of the French nursery, with already a queer touch of melancholy and affectation foreign to England. "We will not go to the woods, the laurels have been cut. But the laurels of the woods, shall we see them fade? No, each one in his turn will go and pick them up. If the cricket sleeps on it, we must not hurt him. The nightingale's song will wake him up, and also the linnets with her sweet voice. And Joan, the shepherdess with her white basket, gathering wild roses and strawberries . . . cricket, cricket, come, you must sing. For the laurels in the wood are already grown again."

By slow stages, such as "follow the leader" ("à la queue leu leu") and passing under the bridge ("oranges and lemons," "la plus aimable à mon gré"), the round becomes a game and the game a comedy with dialogue, chorus, etc. But we can do no more here than allude to these last developments of the musical nursery rhyme, which is particularly well represented in France ("La tour prend garde," "Qui est-ce qui passe ici si tard?" etc.).

The second group of children's songs includes those which are more imaginative than musical—that is to say, those in which the images suggested by the story are more important than the rhythm of the song, and which are not necessarily connected with any physical gesture or movement.

It is a mistake to think that a fanciful story must necessarily provide unexpected and surprising incidents. Children take almost as much pleasure in the most obvious remark as in the wildest fairy-tale. It is delightful that the cow should jump over the moon, but it is perhaps still more wonderful that two and one should make three or that the first should lead the way:

Quand trois poules vont au champs
La première va devant,

and, in English: "So there was an end of one, two and three, Billy Pringle, Betty Pringle and the piggy wiggy wee!" All the humour of Little Bo-Peep's story lies in the fact that her sheep did carry their tails behind them. In the same way, the cat of the French Bergère ("et ron ron ron, petit patapon") could not eat her cheese without dipping its chin in it:

Il n'y mit pas la patte,
Il y mit le menton.

In most imaginative stories there is a certain childlike and obvious humour. What more natural than to make a king behave like a clown, or an animal like a human being? Good King Arthur who steals three pecks of barley meal to make a pudding, is the true cousin of the "Bon roi Dagobert" who was reprimanded by St. Eloi for appearing at Court with his trousers put back frontways:

C'est vrai, lui dit le roi,
Je vais les remettre à l'endroit.

But when the English song declares that "What they could not eat that day the Queen the next day fried," it soars to the supreme height of social topsy-turvydom. We may still conceive a picturesque and Bohemian king, but a thrifty queen passes our understanding.

Just as we found the French richer in rounds and games, we now find the English far richer in the way of animal stories. One may wade through a good deal of literature before finding any equivalent for "A frog he would a-wooing

go" or the love-story of Cock Robin and Jenny Wren. It would be interesting to find out the reason for this apparent poverty, and if the great popularity of La Fontaine's fables has, to a certain extent, hampered the creation of this particular kind of song.

A step further, and we seek in vain for any system in the series of images evoked by the nursery poet. His imagination runs riot and becomes entirely guided by the rhyme. There is, however, this difference between his work and that of many "men of letters," that the latter pretend not to be influenced by the difficulty of finding their rhymes, while the popular singer makes genuinely a virtue of a necessity. When he flings "Hey diddle diddle" as a challenge, everybody realises that some fiddle will have to be brought in, and if the cow jumps over the moon it is to afford an opportunity to the dish of running away with the spoon. It may seem incongruous to hunt cockchafers, but if the hunter rides a stick instead of a horse, the riddle solves itself:

Il était un petit homme
A cheval sur un bâton
Qui s'en allait à la chasse,
A la chasse aux hannetons,
Et ti ton taine et ti ton ton.

We have now reached the summit of childlike inspiration where the music of the words evokes the pictures and where beauty walks hand in hand with laughter, where the king is "counting out his money" and the queen "eating bread and honey," where the cuckoo sings "coucou" and the frightened boy understands "coupe lui le cou" and runs away: "Et moi de m'en courre, courre, courre et moi de m'en courir." It is a blissful and wonderful dreamworld, alive with mirth, sunshine, fresh air and ever-changing colours. There is no healthier poetry. There is none closer to the spring of true inspiration, where ideas and images are created by the music of flowing words.

IN THE GARDEN

STORING APPLES.

MOST of the text-books on gardening recommend that Apples should be stored in single layers in the fruit rooms. These instructions are usually accompanied by illustrations showing the interior of a fruit room with the Apples arranged on latticed trays or wooden shelves, and so spaced out that no two fruits are touching one another. In anything like a bumper year it would require an enormous area to accommodate the crop in this way from even a small garden. But apart from the question of space, is it advisable, we ask, to spread the fruit out in single layers? Let us for one moment consider Nature's way of dealing with fallen fruit. We must all, at some time or another, have found Apples in the spring that have fallen from the tree and been accidentally buried in earth and leaves. Such fruits invariably turn out sound, fresh and crisp. They are often found in a perfect state of preservation and in good eating condition long after the store Apples are over. Our forefathers, when dealing with small quantities of Apples, used to place them in earthenware vessels and bury them in the ground, and in such circumstances the Apples kept sound for months.

Last year in particular we received many complaints about the keeping qualities of late Apples. The fruits shrivelled early, turned soft, and were lacking in juice and freshness. In almost every case the fruit, when gathered, had been placed in single layers. Now, shrivelling in Apples is generally due to one of two causes—either the fruit has been gathered too early, or it has been subject to prolonged exposure to the air in too dry a situation. If Apples, when picked from the tree, are so placed in a dry atmosphere that air can pass freely round each fruit, it must follow that some of the natural moisture of the Apple will be lost by evaporation.

Late-keeping varieties ought *not* to be placed singly on shelves; they keep far better when placed in heaps. When picking all such late varieties as Bramley's Seedling, Annie Elizabeth, Newton Wonder or Cox's Orange Pippin, pile the fruits in layers to a depth of 1 ft. or even 2 ft. and allow a free current of air to pass through the room or shed. In the first place do not gather the fruit until it is properly matured, and then handle it with all reasonable care. Any fruits that are damaged should not be placed in the store. And now just a word about the fruit room. It is not necessary to have a specially constructed room. Any shed or barn will answer so long as it is cool and frost-proof. A natural earth floor is much better than a wooden one, as it

keeps the atmosphere of the store just damp and cool. Above all things it is necessary to avoid a high temperature. Do not use straw, as it imparts an unpleasant flavour to the Apples. Fruit keeps best in the dark, and the temperature in winter should be as near 40 deg. as possible. So long as the Apples in the store feel clammy and damp, a circulation of air should be kept up. It might be imagined that the fruit would show a greater tendency to rot if placed in heaps, but this is not so if the work is carefully done and reasonable care is taken to ventilate the house, especially while the fruit is sweating. In October last Mr. E. Molyneux of Swanmore Park Farm, Hants, piled 200 bushels of fruit of Bramley's Seedling from 2 ft. to 3 ft. thick,

and when the last two bushels were removed in the middle of January, only two unsound fruits were found. Out of the whole quantity stored there were not more than twenty-five unsound ones. In the gardens at Aldenham House is a well constructed fruit room with a low thatched roof, in which the fruit is arranged on wooden shelves tier over tier. It is an up-to-date fruit room which is proof against frost, rats and mice. Last year this room could not meet the demands made upon it, and Apples were arranged many thicknesses on each other, and their keeping properties, says Mr. Beckett, were never better. Where small quantities of late-keeping Apples are kept for dessert, we find it an excellent plan to wrap each fruit in tissue paper and pack them away in wooden boxes. The boxes may be kept in any out-of-the-way place so long as it is cool. H. C.



CORYDALIS OCHROLEUCA AND WELSH POPPY.

CORYDALIS AND WELSH POPPY.

AFEW rough stone steps lead down to a cool room in connection with some garden buildings. It was meant for a Mushroom house, but though Mushrooms have never been grown there, it is a useful store place for Apples and some of the root vegetables. There is a space outside where Rosemary bushes are grown. Some old, overgrown Rosemaries were removed last year and young ones planted. Meanwhile Nature has taken the little place in hand, and a self-sown patch of Corydalis ochroleuca and Welsh Poppy, growing up together, show what good companions these plants are to each other. The pale yellow and white of the Corydalis—such a much better plant than its near relative the native *C. lutea*—and its light green leaves (bluish in *C. lutea*) accord perfectly with the yellow bloom and bright green foliage of the *Meconopsis*. If one had tried hard to invent a groundwork for the growing Rosemaries one could not have found a better. G. J.

LITERATURE

A BOOK OF THE WEEK

The Setons, by "O. Douglas." (Hodder and Stoughton.)

AT the beginning of the war readers swallowed wholesale a vast output of stories, most of which seem to have been composed by amateur recruiting sergeants. At any rate, the standard ending was that the recalcitrant was finally prevailed upon by the wiles of his enamorata to don armour and go forth and fight for the glory of his country. This was all part of a well intentioned and salutary movement, but the story and its ending gradually became what Hodge calls "monotonous," and the books, for the most part, are forgotten.

The Setons, by "O. Douglas," of which a second edition is just about to be published, belongs to a different type. It is a book the action of which begins in 1913 and ends, as far as it can be said to end, in or about 1915. The influence of war is felt and expressed, but the writer does not make it the centre round which the rest revolves. The freshness of the book comes from its vivid rendering of suburban life in Glasgow. "O. Douglas," like other Scottish authors of the day, has been strongly attracted by the self-made man and his family, whom his exertions have raised from poverty and struggle to affluence. This is the note on which it begins. The neighbourhood seems to be that of Pollok-shields, where stands a neat villa with the name "Jeanieville" cut in the pillar—a name which must surely have delighted the author of a recent paper, "By Any Other Name." "Are ye there, Mamma? Mamma, are ye there?" says the self-made man as he has done all his four-and-twenty years of married life, during which his first call has been for his wife when he comes home. They are to have their first real society supper, and he, full of thought and reckless of expense, has brought home a pineapple, though in handing it over he cannot help saying "not but what I prefer tinned ones maself." Mrs. Thomson pats her husband approvingly and calls him "Papa," after which slight but graphic touches we seem to have been put in possession of the personal equation of the honest and thriving couple. Jessie, the daughter, completes the picture. She has been at a fine school, picked up the most genteel companions, has learned to speak what she thinks English, insists on her father putting on his swallow-tail, and disdains the notion of her mother that when the guests arrive they should have something to eat and not be kept waiting two hours for that necessary function. Her little nose turns up naturally at the smell of sausages which pervades the place, and altogether we get a very lively idea of the Glasgow suburbanite at home.

The company is in keeping with the hosts. The girl has friends of her own kidney, but her parents have insisted on having the old family friends, so that the company is delightfully mixed. Among them is Elizabeth Seton, the charming, impulsive, frank, kind daughter of The Manse, who is the heroine of the story and one not altogether unfit to be placed beside that other Elizabeth who lives for ever in the pages of "Pride and Prejudice." No such party would be complete in Glasgow unless there was an artist in it, and here is one who promptly falls in love with the heroine, at least as far as certain limitations will allow him to fall in love with anybody. To tell the truth, Mr. Stevenson is a little boring and his presence is a taint in the story, and when the second hero appears on the stage later on, the discrepancy between them is too open and visible. The boy of the book is undoubtedly Buff, Elizabeth's brother. He is a little chap with an abounding love of all sorts of animals, wild and tame, and a taste for mischief that saves him from any impression of being too much sentimentalised. We shall say nothing about him beyond quoting a letter he wrote to a mother bereft by the war:

There was one rather smudged-looking envelope without a stamp, and we wondered where it had come from. It was from Buff! He had written it without asking anyone's advice, and had walked the three miles to deliver it. I think that grimy little letter did Mrs. Elliot good. We had read so many letters, all saying the same thing, all saying it more or less beautifully, one had the feeling that one was being sluiced all over with sympathy. Buff's was different. It ran:

"I am sorry that Tommy is killed for he had a cheery face and I liked him. But it can't be helped. He will be quite comfortable with God and I hope that someone is being kind to old Pepper for he liked him too.—Your aff. friend

"DAVID STUART SETON.

"P.S. I'm not allowed to draw riligus pictures now or I would have shown you God being very glad to see Tommy."

"Old Pepper" is a mongrel that Tommy rescued and was kind to, and it was so like Buff to think of the feelings of the dumb animal.

One would have thought it impossible to add to the types of the Scottish minister already in that national gallery which we call Literature. But Elizabeth's father is as new and individual as he could have been if none of his kind had ever appeared before, and there is nothing in his character finer than his relations with his daughter. She, in her independent, spontaneous way, often expresses a doubt that the Puritan and the Covenanter would not have tolerated, as, for instance, her questioning the serviceableness of her father's reading as a lesson those verses from Jeremiah which consist of "words that Jeremiah the prophet spake unto Baruch the son of Neriah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah." No wonder Elizabeth stroked the cat and thought how remote it all sounded, and later on she took an opportunity of chaffing her father about it.

Yes, I'm going. There's just one thing—about the chapter at prayers. I was wondering—only wondering, you know—if Baruch the son of Neriah had any real bearing on our everyday life?

Mr. Seton looked at his daughter, then remarked as he turned back to his work: "I sometimes think you are a very ignorant creature, Elizabeth."

Nothing more need be said about the plot or the characters, as readers seem already to be running after them as they like to run after new creations. But a word may be said about the style of the writing. Its great merit lies in a transparent honesty and sincerity. There is nothing forced and no straining, but the attention is arrested as it is by sincerity in the tone of a voice, and the mind of the writer is well furnished with the literature of her country. Like Scott, she has interlarded her tale with delightful quotations from great authors such as Shakespeare and Sir Walter, unknown authors like those of the ballads, and new writers of unexampled merit such as Mrs. Violet Jacob, with the result that after laying the book down the effect is that of a long and pleasant conversation with a most sympathetic and understanding mind.

Up and Down, by E. F. Benson. (Hutchinson, 6s.)

MR. BENSON has written a beautiful yet unequal book which has the effect of being all true and certainly cannot be pure fiction. A great deal of it might be called "Everyman's Diary," for it records what most educated and temperate-minded people have felt, thought and said about things in general during the war. To some readers it will be an annoyance to have recalled the censure which they passed on President Wilson before America joined the Allies or the previous occasions on which good news from the western front set us talking of the end of the war, but Mr. Benson, save in the instance of the Russians who travelled through England to France with snow on their boots, claims no omniscience, and it is a book which thoughtful people will read with pleasure and keep and read, in part at least, again. This journal, as it were, wraps itself around the slender thread of the story of one Francis who thought himself an adopted son of Italy until war came and proved his love of England, as it has proved it in many another. Francis volunteered, fought in Gallipoli and Italy, and died of cancer. His extraordinarily lovable character, the fine simplicity of his mind and life, are told in Mr. Benson's best manner, and we know how good that can be. In another part of the book in his comparison of English and German character Mr. Benson seems to us hopelessly wrong in his conclusions, just as occasionally he uses the worst possible word for his sense, such as "stale" in describing the scent of decaying leafage on an autumn morning, but on the many other occasions he is both wise in his judgments and felicitous in his expressions so that these small blemishes serve on the whole to make us feel more completely in his confidence and more sure of his sincerity.

Captain Dieppe, by Anthony Hope. (Skeffington, 5s.)

"CAPTAIN" DIEPPE—he would have been the first to admit the justice of the quotation marks—was a brisk soldier of fortune who at some period not clearly defined, in a country which seems to be Italy, while more or less in hiding from the political agents of some other country owing to the failure of plans not described here, arrives at nightfall at the castle of Count Fieramondi. Half the castle is brightly lighted, half in darkness, which Dieppe, on being courteously entertained by the Count, discovers to be the outward sign of the divided lives of its master and mistress. When you have once decided that if Mr. Hope will not give you any more definite data it must be because he is satisfied that you will be better without it, you will be able to enjoy a very entertaining tale of adventure and intrigue. The agents who want Dieppe's papers and the blackmailers who want the Countess' money create plenty of complications, and so does Dieppe by falling in love with the Countess while acting as her husband's ambassador. There is fighting—quite original fighting, too, when the "Captain" opposes a well flung truss of hay to his opponent's bullets—and love-making and humour of the sort in which gallant heroes generally excel when in tight corners. We admit that we guessed the secret which makes the *dénouement* possible as soon as we knew that it existed, but perhaps we were merely unfortunate. Our thanks, at any rate, are due to "Captain" Dieppe for an evening in which he enabled us to forget that there was such a thing as a war.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE PRONUNCIATION OF SUSSEX PLACE-NAMES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I would be extremely obliged if any of your readers, quoting their authorities, could give me information as to the pronunciation of Sussex place-names ending in "ham," preceded by an "s" or "p." The village in question, when the difficulty arose, was Felpham. On turning to a book on Sussex we were told to pronounce it as two distinct syllables: Felp-ham. But, on the other hand, on an old map of Sussex of 1610, the place is spelt Felfeham, about the pronunciation of which there can be no mistake.—L. F.

CRAYFISH AND CHUB.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Is not this rather odd? Walking along the bank of the Colnbrook yesterday I saw a dead chub floating. An overhanging branch had prevented it being carried down stream. I pulled it out and found the two front claws of a very large crayfish sticking out of its mouth. I tried to pull the crayfish out, but only got the claws. I then sliced open the chub and found the rest of the crayfish stuck in its gullet. The belly was quite empty. The chub weighed 3½ lb., and the crayfish was the largest I ever saw in England. Both were in perfect condition, and could not have been long dead.—J. A. H. D.

PRESERVING PEARS FOR WINTER USE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As a subscriber to your paper for years past, may I ask you to give me the benefit of your advice. I have several William pear trees which generally yield well, but more than half of the fruits go wrong before they can be eaten. Is there any process by which I can preserve them whole for future use as dessert pears or otherwise? Your advice will be greatly appreciated and may help to save good food, very necessary in these times.—J. M. HENDERSON.

[An expert to whom our correspondent's query was submitted has replied as follows: William pears may be preserved by bottling, either with or without sugar, in vacuum bottles. They should be selected just under-ripe, peeled, and the core removed. Use a silver or silver-plated knife when preparing, as steel stains the fruit. The pears may either be halved, quartered, or sliced, as desired, the portions not being handled being kept under water, for the air rapidly discolours them. Fill the bottles with the fruit as tightly as possible without breaking it, and fill up to the top with water or syrup, fit on the rings and caps, place in the sterilising vessel, and gradually bring the temperature up to about 160deg. (Fahr.). Maintain at this temperature for about five minutes, then remove the bottles and stand them in a cool, draught-proof place to cool off. Pears may also be dried for culinary use by placing them on wire trays in an oven with a temperature of 200deg. to 240deg. (Fahr.). This method will take about eight to ten hours to complete.—ED.]

THE PROFITS OF RABBIT-KEEPING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have been much interested in your articles on rabbit-keeping for profit, especially the one on "War-time Rabbit Breeding," signed "F." But I cannot see how it can be profitable after the war, in ordinary peace-time, or even now. "F" quotes the price of a 4 lb. Belgian hare at 6s., but I think I am right in saying the price of rabbits is controlled, 1s. 9d. or 2s. I think, retail. At that price, selling 3½ rabbits a week, his profit of 15s. 9d. would be reduced to 1s. 9d. a week! In peace-time the price of a rabbit is 1s. or thereabouts, and I do not see how one could make any profit. I have just had hutches made and am getting Flemish Giants, so I shall be so much obliged if you or some of your readers will enlighten me. The present price of Belgian hares and Flemish Giants for breeding must be disregarded, as in the nature of things that will not last. I do not know whether the markets and wholesale dealers give a bigger price for these rabbits than for ordinary ones, or whether they buy them at so much a pound.—ETHEL E. PURDON.

[Our correspondent's enquiry was submitted to the author of the article, whose answer is as follows: "My article on 'Tame Table Rabbit-breeding in War-time,' signed 'F,' was written in early July. The price of 4 to 5 lb. rabbits was then on the Smithfield Market, London, about 1s. 6d. per lb.; on my local markets (Essex) such rabbits at that time were readily selling for 6s. each; the price for such rabbits has, however, now dropped to from 3s. to 3s. 6d. each, but I am told that August and September are the worst months for the sale of table rabbits, and the prices after September will rise. The price of tame table rabbits is not controlled; the price of wild rabbits is. I understand that the usual average price in peace time for tame table rabbits 4 to 5 lb. is 2s. to 2s. 6d. each, and at this price rabbit-rearing will pay well (better per head than chicken-rearing). I find about 4 lb. of dry food, such as oats and beans are required (with the addition, of course, of grass, weeds, etc.), to make a 4 lb. rabbit; this food before the war would have cost less than 4d., now it costs 1s. If tame table rabbits are sent to salesmen on the Smithfield Market, such as C. Brookes, they will fetch now from 9d. to 1s. per lb.; but to test the true market value of such rabbits, from twenty to thirty, all of one kind (Flemish or Belgian) and graded to one size, should be sent as regular weekly consignments. I find a 4 lb. rabbit requires about three hours of one person's time to produce."—ED.]

SWALLOWS FORSAKING NESTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In olden days the superstitious alleged that swallows (house-martins) forsaking their nests was a sure sign of a death. It is rather strange that my only experience of such a thing happening was followed by a death. This was, of course, a coincidence. If swallows are numerous they will frequently drive away the house-martins. On one occasion four pairs built under the eaves of a house exactly facing mine. They were happily engaged in rearing their young when four swifts arrived upon the scene. Morning, noon and night the "devillings" dashed screaming up to the nests, whirling and circling

over and above the eaves, then level, then below, until the harried martins fled never to return, and the swifts were left to worry something else with their screaming. I think that the two last inclement springs have so depleted the ranks of the martins that there are only a few left. The swallows are as numerous as ever under the roof of my house, and building upon the rafters of the sheds, but where, three years ago, there were dozens of martins building under the eaves of a shed, to-day there is only one solitary nest; while my own home, which for many years has always been occupied by many martins, has not boasted of a single one this year. Last year there was one which was deserted after the eggs were laid. My experiences with martins' nests are that they are generally built on the north or western side of a house, provided, of course, that the eaves are wide and suitable.—H. T. C.

GREY SQUIRRELS IN THE LONDON PARKS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It may interest your writer on grey squirrels to know that they were not imported by the "Zoo," but by the animal dealer down at the London Docks, who had a big cage of them a few years back (some fifty pairs) at the time they first appeared in Regent's Park. Melanism could be profitably studied in this breed.—T. W. SMITH.

A RHYME OF THE MONTHS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Some sixty years ago I learnt on my mother's knee a rhyme story of the months, but can only remember a few of the lines:

"January brings the snow,
Makes our feet and fingers glow,
February brings the rain,
Thaws the frozen earth again,
April brings the primrose sweet,
Scatters daisies at our feet,
August brings the sheaves of corn,
Then the Harvest home is borne."

I wonder if one of your many readers can supply the full tale of months, and, if so, would you kindly print it in your very interesting correspondence page? The story is both amusing and instructive, and one that might well be taught the young people of to-day.—C. E. THORPE.

THE REVIVAL OF COB COTTAGES IN DEVONSHIRE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

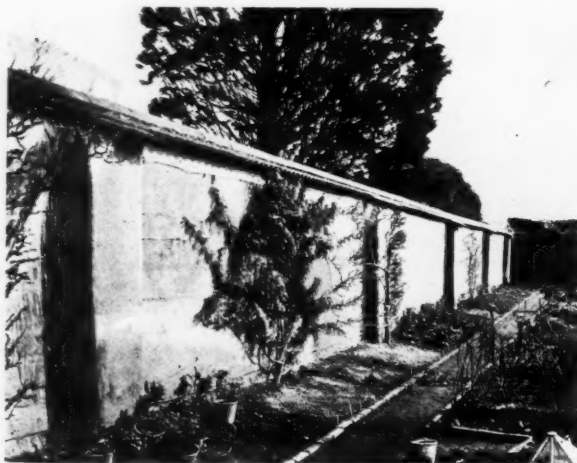
SIR—As several questions have been put to me on the subject of reviving cob building, perhaps you will kindly allow me to supplement the information given in the article in your issue of June 22nd. Not unnaturally the cost of cob walls as compared with other materials is one of these questions. It is not possible to give a close estimate of what would now be the comparative cost of a building in cob, stone or brick, as this must depend upon the exact locality of the site. It may, however, be of assistance, if I quote particulars of the relative cost of cob and stone building in Devon in the year 1808 when cob was in common use. The stonework referred to was rough rubble, and not with square or dressed blocks. It must be borne in mind that up to that date practically all material, stone, lime, etc., was carried on horses' backs. Wheel carts, which began to creep in about the beginning of 1800, were not in general use until twenty or thirty years later. As a boy I knew a farmer who remembered the first wheeled cart coming to Dunsford. In 1838 the Rector of Bridford (the Christowell of Blackmore's novel) recorded the fact that in 1818 there was only one cart in the parish and it was scarcely used twice a year. In 1808 the price of building varied according to the district. In the northern part of the county the common price of stonework, including the value of three quarts of cider or beer daily, was from 22d. to 24d. the perch (16½ ft.), 22ins. in width and 1ft. in height. Including all expenses of quarrying and carriage of materials, stonework worked out at from 5s. to 6s. per perch running measure, and cob estimated in like manner at about 3s. 6d. Masons when not employed by the piece received 2s. per day and allowance of beer or cider. In the Dunstone district, the clay shales from which make the best cob, mason work was 18d. per rope of 20ft. in length, 18ins. thick and 1ft. high, stone and all materials found and placed on the spot; cob-work of the same measure was 14d. In the South Hams district masonwork cost 2s. 6d., and cob 2s. per perch of 18ft. in length, 2ft. thick and 1ft. high. In those parts of the red land where Dunstone shillot or clay shale is not available, the red clay was mixed with small stones or gravel, and frequently the cob was laid and trodden down between side boards as used in building concrete walls. Three cartloads of clay built a perch and a half of wall 20ins. wide and 1ft. deep. Eight bundles of barley straw, equal to one pack horse load, were mixed and tempered with nine cartloads of clay. Thatching in 1808 cost 8s. per square of roof, 100 sheaves of wheat straw reed, weighing 25lb. each, were sufficient for one square. Thatching, however, is not, as many suppose, indispensable as a roofing for cob buildings, slate, found in many parts of Devon, was frequently used, and of late years Welsh and Delabole slates, tiles and, unfortunately, from the picturesque point of view, corrugated iron have to a large extent supplanted thatch. Vancouver in his report on the Survey of Devon for the Board of Agriculture in 1808, gave the following recipe, which he described as a preserving and highly ornamental wash for rough-cast that was then getting into common use: "Four parts of pounded lime, three of sand, two of pounded wood ashes, and one of scoria of iron, mixed well together and made sufficiently fluid to be applied with a brush. When dry it gives the appearance of new Portland stone, and affords an excellent protection against the penetrating force of the south-westerly storms." For the rough weather sides of cob buildings I have found cement and sand, finished with a rough surface, satisfactory, and far more durable than ordinary lime and gravel rough cast. For interior cob walls laths are not necessary, the old plastering was frequently laid on too thick. Of late years I have used with excellent

results granite silicon plaster for ceilings and walls. This requires no ha'r, and is easily applied. Cob-making was, like many other local trades, carried on in some families from generation to generation and developed by them into an art, but apart from these specialists, practically every village mason and his labourers built as much with cob as they did with stone. There are men still left in various parts of the county who have made cob, and it would, in my opinion, be of advantage if demonstrations could be given by them to discharged sailors and soldiers who are anxious to take up work on the land. In cob building, as in many other arts and crafts, a little showing is of far greater help to the novice than any amount of text-book instruction. The knowledge and experience that these men would gain from being shown and, better still, assisting an expert in making cob, would be of material advantage in the development of the county scheme promoted by the Central Land Association for the establishment of ex-Service men on the land. They could try their 'prentice hands on walls, tool-sheds, cart linneys, etc., for their own use, and some no doubt would develop into expert builders capable of constructing walls for dwelling houses from approved plans. The depletion of our home-grown timber supply and the prohibitive cost of practically all building material have in effect brought about the conditions that led our forefathers to utilise the suitable material that lay nearest to hand, and unless some endeavour is made to follow their methods and profit by their example, it will be impossible to provide sufficient buildings for the necessary equipment of the allotments and small holdings, let alone housing accommodation, for the workers on the land. While these brief notes are restricted to Devon cob, similar methods of building prevailed in other districts, e.g., Norfolk and Suffolk, built with "mud clumps." Captain Mildmay has, in your issue of August 3rd, testified to the beauty of West Somerset cottages, and in the previous issue Mr. B. N. A. Orphoot gave some very interesting figures as to cost of cob buildings, and spoke well of their comfort. Valuable information as to method and cost of chalk building in Wiltshire is given in the Report of the Departmental Committee on the Equipment of Small Holdings, 1913.—F. FULFORD.

COB WALLS FOR KITCHEN GARDENS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The wall in the photograph which I enclose might serve as a model of all that a cob garden wall ought to be, and its publication will perhaps



AN EXCELLENT MODEL FOR COB GARDEN WALLS.

be of interest to your readers. The buttresses should be noticed—which, of course, serve the secondary purpose of sheltering the fruit trees—tiles are used for the "hat" upon which cob insists, and do not suffer from the objection to the use of thatch on the score of harbouring insects, and the trees are held up by wire strands running between wooden pegs instead of by the old-fashioned method of wooden fork pegs, which, after some years of use, considerably damaged the surface of the wall. The urgent necessity for increased rural housing and the high price of building materials likely to obtain for many years after the war make the possibilities of cob of increased interest. Those who live in districts in which brick and stone are scarce should profit by the space devoted to the subject in the pages of COUNTRY LIFE.—J. C.

LONDON MULBERRY TREES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In the garden of 41, Grove End Road, St. John's Wood, London, there was a beautiful mulberry tree which gave delicious fruits, but as we left for Edinburgh in 1870 I do not know if it is still there. The tree was a very fine one.—EMILY HODGSON.

HEDGEHOG ON THE MENU.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Can any of your numerous readers tell me how to cook a hedgehog? I have always been told that if he is covered in clay, put among ashes, baked, and the ball split open, he is then delicious; but I have never met anyone who could tell me how thick the clay covering should be, how long he should be baked, how you are to prevent the ball from exploding when the steam generates inside, or how you are to split open a glowing ball of clay without either burning your fingers or losing all the gravy. Perhaps hedgehogs may be cooked by some simpler method? I should be very glad of any information, for, if hedgehogs are as good as they are reported to be, they ought to be a valuable adjunct to the larder. I may mention I have never met anyone who has actually eaten one.—G. NOBLE.

THE STORKS OF MESOPOTAMIA.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—These photographs were taken at Baqubah, near Baghdad. It is a curious fact that you do not find storks anywhere below Baghdad; but in Baghdad itself and all other towns north-east from there to which I went numbers of them were to be seen. Their nests are built on the tops of the walls of houses, and are made of sticks loosely thrown together. Their call, caused by the rapid opening and shutting of their beaks, resembles the old police-rattle.—G. H. BERNERS.



SURVEYING THE SCENE.



ON THE NEST.



A BABY WILD BOAR WITH THE B.E.F.

A PORCINE PET.

[THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—A few weeks ago you allowed me to send you an account of our small sanglier; here is the effort of a village photographer. He is now quite tame and is allowed to run about just as he likes, but he rarely strays far from the cookhouse, or, indeed, from the corporal cook. He has deserted me altogether. He has developed a great liking for tea, and when meals were of the picnic order he was rather a nuisance, as the moment a man put his cup down he thought it was his turn to drink. Dogs he does not mind in the least, but domestic pigs "put the wind up" him considerably.—E. B. B.